

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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TO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, MR, US

SUBJECT:LANG-PRITCHARD SUGAR REFINERY PROJECT

REFS: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 608, (B) KRYZA-KILLION MARCH 6 TELECON

1. AF/W HAS BEEN TRYING REACH LANG PRESIDENT OLIPHANT FOR SOME TIME. WE HAVE JUST MADE CONTACT WITH PRITCHARD VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DON DIXON, WHO ADVISES OLIPHANT ON VACATION IN EUROPE FOR PAST SEVERAL WEEKS.

2. DIXON GAVE COUNTRY OFFICER LONG EXPLANATION OF PRITCHARD VIEW OF CURRENT IMPASSE WITH GIRM ON SUGAR REFINERY. HE EMPHASIZED SEVERAL POINTS:

(A) PRITCHARD WILL NOT RPT NOT ABANDON PROJECT, BUT WILL NOT CARRY OUT ACTIONS URGED BY GIRM WHICH "MAKE NO SENSE";

(B) PRESENT "ILL-ADVISED" LAW SUIT BY U.S. SHIPPER KUHNE
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AND NAGEL CO. JOINED BY MAURITANIAN FREIGHT FORWARDER SCTTM HAS FORCED PULL-OUT OF ALL PRITCHARD PERSONNEL, SINCE NO RPT NO FUNDS AVAILABLE TO PAY ANY EXPENSES IN MAURITANIA BECAUSE FUNDS BLOCKED BY COMPLAINANT'S ACTION;

(C) UNDER NO RPT NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD GIRM CONSIDER THAT A SUGAR REFINERY IS IN FINAL TURN-OVER CONDITION PRIOR TO

ONE FULL YEAR OF OPERATION. THIS REQUIRED FOR TRAINING PERSONNEL, WORKING OUT EQUIPMENT SNAGS, DEVELOPING MARKET DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.

(D) SOSUMA HAS NO RPT NO PERSONNEL, NO BUDGET, AND NO MARKETING PLAN FOR SUGAR WHICH REFINERY NOW IN POSITION TO PRODUCE.

3. PRITCHARD NOW OPERATING WITH "SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT GROUP IN CHARGE" AND SEEKS MEETING WITH EXIM NEAR END MARCH TO DISCUSS WHERE NEXT STEPS TO DEAL WITH IMPASSE. PRITCHARD PREPARING DOCUMENT OUTLINING SITUATION, AND WILL PROVIDE COPIES TO COUNTRY OFFICER AS SOON AS AVAILABLE. VANCE

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